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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

International Trade Administration

Docket No.: 130708596-3596-01

Call for Applications for the International Buyer Program Select Service for Calendar Year 2014

AGENCY: International Trade Administration, Department of Commerce

ACTION: Notice and Call for Applications

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) announces that it will accept applications for the International Buyer Program (IBP) Select service for calendar year 2014 (January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014). This announcement sets out the objectives, procedures and application review criteria for IBP Select. Under the IBP Select the International Trade Administration (ITA) recruits international buyers to U.S. trade shows to meet with U.S. suppliers exhibiting at those shows. The main difference between IBP and IBP Select is that IBP offers worldwide promotion, whereas IBP Select focuses on promotion and recruitment in no more than five international markets. Specifically, through the IBP Select, the DOC selects domestic trade shows that will receive DOC assistance in the form of targeted promotion and recruitment in five foreign markets, export counseling to exhibitors, and export counseling and matchmaking services at the trade show. This notice covers selection for IBP Select participation during calendar year 2014. It also announces a new pilot initiative for the IBP Select, which will allow selected trade show organizers to add target markets beyond the five selected markets at a cost.

DATES: Applications for IBP Select must be received by August 16, 2013.

APPLICATION: The IBP Select application is available at <http://www.export.gov/IBP>.

Applications must be completed and submitted via the online form.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary Rand, Director, International Buyer Program, Trade Promotion Programs, U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, International Trade Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Ronald Reagan Building, Suite 800M - Mezzanine Level - Atrium North, Washington, DC 20004; Telephone (202) 482-0691; Facsimile: (202) 482-7800; Email: IBP2014@trade.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The IBP was established in the Omnibus Trade and Competitiveness Act of 1988 (Pub. L. 100-418, title II, §2304, codified at 15 U.S.C. § 4724) to bring international buyers together with U.S. firms by promoting leading U.S. trade shows in industries with high export potential. The IBP emphasizes cooperation between the DOC and trade show organizers to benefit U.S. firms exhibiting at selected events and provides practical, hands-on assistance such as export counseling and market analysis to U.S. companies interested in exporting. Shows selected for the IBP Select will provide a venue for U.S. companies interested in expanding their sales into international markets.

Through the IBP, the DOC selects trade shows that DOC determines to be leading trade shows with participation by U.S. firms interested in exporting. DOC provides successful applicants with assistance in the form of overseas promotion of the show by U.S. Embassies and Consulates; outreach to show participants about exporting; recruitment of potential buyers to attend the events; and staff assistance in setting up and staffing international trade centers at the

events. Targeted promotion in no more than five markets can be executed through the overseas offices of ITA or in U.S. Embassies in countries where ITA does not maintain offices.

ITA is accepting applications for IBP Select from trade show organizers of trade events taking place between January 1, 2014 and December 31, 2014. Selection of a trade show for IBP Select is valid for one event. A trade show organizer seeking selection for a recurring event must submit a new application for selection for each occurrence of the event. For events that occur more than once in a calendar year, the trade show organizer must submit a separate application for each event.

There is no fee required to submit an application. For IBP Select in calendar year 2014, ITA expects to select approximately 10 events from among the applicants. ITA will select those events that are determined to most clearly support the statutory mandate in 15 U.S.C. 4721 to promote U.S. exports, especially those of small- and medium-sized enterprises, and that best meet the selection criteria articulated below. Once selected, applicants will be required to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the DOC, and submit payment of the \$6,000 2014 participation fee within 30 days of written notification of acceptance into IBP Select. The MOA constitutes an agreement between the DOC and the show organizer specifying which responsibilities for international promotion and export assistance services at the trade shows are to be undertaken by the DOC as part of the IBP Select and, in turn, which responsibilities are to be undertaken by the show organizer. Anyone requesting application information will be sent a sample copy of the MOA along with the link to the online application form and a copy of this Federal Register Notice. Applicants are encouraged to review the MOA closely, as IBP Select participants are expected to comply with all terms, conditions, and obligations in the MOA.

Trade show organizer obligations include the construction of an International Trade Center at the trade show, production of an export interest directory, and provision of complimentary hotel accommodations for DOC staff as explained in the MOA. The responsibilities to be undertaken by the DOC will be carried out by ITA. ITA responsibilities include targeted promotion of the trade show and, where feasible, recruitment of international buyers to that show from the five target markets identified, provision of on-site export assistance to U.S. exhibitors at the show, and the reporting of results to the show organizer.

For this selection cycle only, ITA is piloting the opportunity for selected show organizers to procure the services of our staff in the Embassies and Consulates beyond the five already agreed-upon markets to 1) escort buyers from those markets to the show, and 2) provide at-show services such as translation, logistical support, and introductions to U.S. suppliers. This secondary level of service for markets beyond the original five markets does not include recruitment of the delegations from those markets. The cost for this additional service is based on the cost of the Embassy or Consulate staff person, i.e., delegation leader, escorting the delegation to the show and providing at-show services. This secondary service will be priced at \$1,250 per each additional delegation, and the total fee to be charged will not exceed \$9,750 (meaning no more than three additional delegations are acceptable) for participating in the IBP Select. The show organizer will also be responsible for providing complimentary lodging for the delegation leader providing this secondary service.

Selection as an IBP Select show does not constitute a guarantee by DOC of the show's success. IBP Select participation status is not an endorsement of the show except as to its international buyer activities. Neither non-selection of an applicant for IBP Select status nor selection for only

one calendar year should be viewed as a determination that the event will not be successful in promoting U.S. exports.

ELIGIBILITY: 2014 U.S. trade events, through the show organizer, with 1,200 or fewer exhibitors are eligible to apply for IBP Select participation. First-time events will also be considered.

Exclusions: U.S. trade shows with over 1,200 exhibitors will not be considered for IBP Select.

General Evaluation Criteria: ITA will evaluate applicants for IBP Select participants using the following criteria:

(a) Level of Intellectual Property Rights Protection (IPR): The trade show organizer includes in the terms and conditions of its exhibitor contracts provisions for the protection of IPR; has procedures in place at the trade show to address IPR infringement, which, at a minimum, provide information to help U.S. exhibitors procure legal representation during the trade show; and agrees to assist the DOC to reach and educate U.S. exhibitors on the Strategy Targeting Organized Piracy (STOP!), IPR protection measures available during the show, and the means to protect IPR in overseas markets, as well as in the United States.

(b) Export Potential: The trade show promotes products and services from U.S. industries that have high export potential, as determined by DOC sources, including industry analysts' assessment of export potential, US&FCS best prospects lists, and U.S. export analysis.

(c) Level of International Interest: The trade show meets the needs of a significant number of overseas markets and corresponds to marketing opportunities as identified by ITA. Previous international attendance at the show may be used as an indicator.

(d) Scope of the Show: The event must offer a broad spectrum of U.S. made products and services for the subject industry. Trade shows with a majority of U.S. firms as exhibitors are given preference.

(e) U.S. Content of Show Exhibitors: Trade shows with exhibitors featuring a high percentage of products produced in the United States or products with a high degree of U.S. content will be preferred.

(f) Stature of the Show: The trade show is clearly recognized by the industry it covers as a leading event for the promotion of that industry's products and services both domestically and internationally, and as a showplace for the latest technology or services in that industry.

(g) Level of Exhibitor Interest: There is significant interest on the part of U.S. exhibitors in receiving international business visitors during the trade show. A significant number of U.S. exhibitors should be new-to-export or seeking to expand their sales into additional export markets.

(h) Level of Overseas Marketing: There has been a demonstrated effort by the applicant to market prior shows overseas. In addition, the applicant should describe in detail the international marketing program to be conducted for the event, and explain how efforts should increase individual and group international attendance.

(i) Level of Cooperation: The applicant demonstrates a willingness to cooperate with ITA to fulfill the program's goals and adhere to the target dates set out in the MOA and in the event timetables, both of which are available from the program office (see the "FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT" section above). Past experience in the IBP will be taken into account in evaluating the applications received.

(j) Delegation Incentives: Waived or reduced admission fees are required for international attendees who are participating in the IBP. Delegation leaders also must be provided complimentary admission to the event. In addition, show organizers should offer a range of incentives to delegations and/or delegation leaders recruited by the DOC overseas posts. Examples of incentives to international visitors and to organized delegations include: Waived or reduced admission fees; special organized events, such as receptions, meetings with association executives, briefings, and site tours; or complimentary accommodations for delegation leaders.

REVIEW PROCESS: ITA will vet all applications received based on the criteria set out in this notice. Vetting will include soliciting input from ITA industry analysts, as well as domestic and international field offices, focusing primarily on the export potential, level of international interest, and stature of the show. In reviewing applications, ITA will also consider sector and calendar diversity in terms of the need to allocate resources to support selected events. The Assistant Secretary for Trade Promotion and Director General of the US&FCS will make all selection decisions.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS: Show organizers submitting applications for the 2014 IBP Select are required to submit: (1) a narrative statement addressing each question in the application, OMB 0625-0143; and (2) a signed statement that “The above information provided is correct and the applicant will abide by the terms set forth in this Call for Applications for the International Buyer Program Select (January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014);” on or before the deadline noted above. There is no fee required to apply. ITA expects to issue the results of this process in August 2013.

LEGAL AUTHORITY: The statutory program authority for ITA to conduct the IBP is 15 U.S.C. § 4724. ITA has the legal authority to enter into MOAs with show organizers under the provisions of the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (MECEA), as amended (22 U.S.C. sections 2455(f) and 2458(c)). MECEA allows ITA to accept contributions of funds and services from firms for the purposes of furthering its mission.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the information collection requirements of the application to this program (0625-0143) under the provisions of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501 et seq.) (OMB Control No. 0625-0143).

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall a person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

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